Jan. 14 – 20, 2016 NEWS YOU CAN USE, NEWS YOU CAN TRUST 75¢

THE EAGLE

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THE BELLEVILLE ENTERPRISE • THE CANTON EAGLE • THE INKSTER LEDGER STAR • THE NORTHVILLE EAGLE
THE PLYMOUTH EAGLE • THE ROMULUS ROMAN • THE WAYNE EAGLE • THE WESTLAND EAGLE

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THE BELLEVILLE ENTERPRISE

Vol. 131, No. 02

Belleville Downtown Development Authority officials have reduced contributions to each city festival and event to $1,500 this year and to $1,000 for 2017-2018.

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THE CANTON EAGLE

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The proposed new 120-foot cell tower behind the Abundant Life Church of God does not have the blessing of several neighbors.

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THE INKSTER LEDGER STAR

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The foster grandparents who participate in the Inkster Legends basketball camps are one of the key elements in the program, said Legends Director Fred Smiley.

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THE NORTHVILLE EAGLE

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The Northville Educational Foundation awarded 49 teachers and 20 projects across the Northville Public Schools District with Innovative Grants totaling $27,892.66 last month.

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Plymouth Township Treasurer Ron Edwards will face Mark Clinton, a 27-year township resident is the first declared challenger for the position in the November election.

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THE WESTLAND EAGLE

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The new Westland City Hall has been honored by the Downriver Branch of the American Public Works Association and will now be considered for state and national honors.

See page 4.

Court battle for DeHoCo land continues

Don Howard
Staff Writer

Plymouth Township attorneys were in the Michigan Court of Appeals last week seeking to overturn a decision by the Chief Judge of the Wayne County Circuit Court ordering them to return a 190-acre parcel of land to City of Detroit.

Lawyers representing the City of Detroit argued that the city has owned the land since 1919 and lost it in an improper foreclosure transaction. Their arguments prevailed in a court proceeding and the township was ordered to return the property to Detroit in a decision last year. Township officials hired former Michigan State Attorney Mike Cox, now in private practice, to aid in the arguments before the three-member appeals panel last week. The oral arguments were heard by Presiding Judge Michael J. Talbot, Judge Mark J. Cavanagh and Judge Kirsten Frank Kelly.

> *"The fact remains, however, that Plymouth Township does not come across as an innocent party to these proceedings.*

"...Plymouth Township is not an innocent third party. The Township engineered the foreclosure by failing to send property tax bills to the City despite the fact that the City at all times was owner of the Subject Property. Plymouth Township then purchased the Subject Property for back taxes and now seeks a multi-million dollar windfall at the expense of the City," Detroit attorneys claimed in a court motion.

Plymouth Township obtained the land in September 2011 for $606,150. The contested property is located at Five Mile and Ridge roads, the site of the former Detroit House of Correction, also known as DeHoCo, which closed in 1986.

Detroit attorneys filed an affidavit in January 2013 with the Wayne County Register of Deeds in hopes of reversing the transfer of the property without legal action. Law Department representatives say they met with then Plymouth Township Supervisor Richard Reaume and Clerk

See **Land,** page 5

In remembrance

Tributes to Dr. King are planned

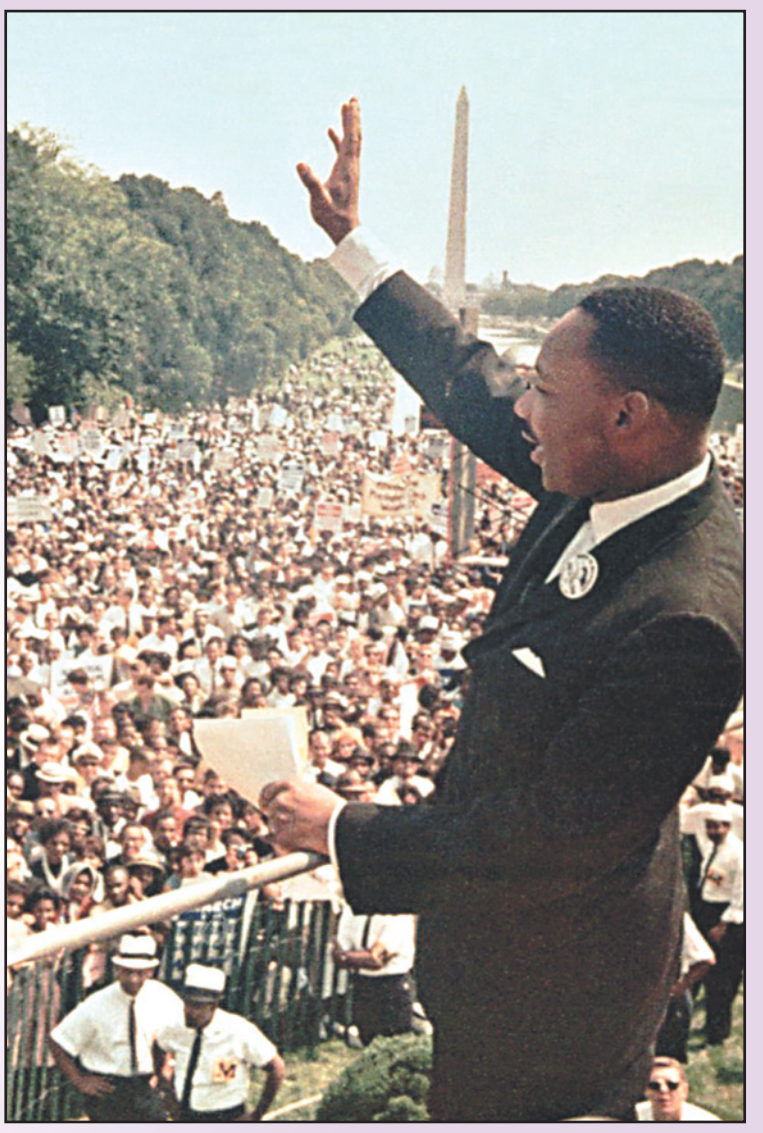
Next Monday, area municipal offices will be closed and commemorative events scheduled throughout the area in remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a leader of the civil rights movement in our country.

Dr. King, pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, AL, was a strong worker for civil rights and was a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading organization of its kind in the nation. Early in December of 1955 he accepted the leadership of the first nonviolent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, the Montgomery, AL bus boycott which lasted 382 days. That boycott led to the Dec. 21, 1956 Supreme Court decision declaring laws requiring segregation on buses as unconstitutional. During the days of the boycott, King was arrested and tortured, his home was bombed and he was subjected to personal abuse, but he emerged as an unparalleled leader of the civil rights movement.

As the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Dr. King traveled more than six million miles and spoke more than 2,500 times between 1957 and 1968 in his battle against injustice. He was the author of five books as well as numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, AL, that caught the attention of the entire world, providing what he called a "coalition of conscience" and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail". He directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his "I Have a Dream" address; he conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson; he was arrested more than 20 times and assaulted at least four times; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by Time magazine in 1963, and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure.

At the age of 35, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. When notified of his selection, he announced that he would turn over the prize money of $54,123 to the furtherance of the civil rights movement.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, where he was to lead



a protest march in sympathy with striking garbage workers of that city, he was assassinated. James Earl Ray was convicted March 10, 1969 of killing Dr. King after entering a guilty plea to forgo a jury trial. He died in 1998 while serving a life sentence in prison.

Congressman John Conyers, D-Detroit, introduced legislation for a commemorative holiday four days after Dr. King's death. When the measure became stalled in Washington, more than six million signatures supporting the bill were submitted to Congress. It took 15 years,

See **Tributes,** page 6

Wild takes helm at Western Wayne Conference

Westland Mayor William R. Wild was sworn in as Chairperson of the Conference of Western Wayne (CWW) last week.

"I am truly honored to serve the 18 communities in Western Wayne County that make up this consortium," said Wild. "We meet monthly to discuss issues such as legislation, transportation, public safety, substance abuse prevention, community and economic development, employment and the environmental health of the region."

The conference board of directors comprises the chief elected officials from each of the 18 member communities. The bi-partisan board members work collectively to discuss mutual issues, share information and generally improve the quality of life for the nearly 700,000 residents who live in the area, according to an official statement from the group.

Member communities include the cities of Belleville, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Garden City, Inkster, Livonia, Northville, Plymouth, Romulus, Wayne and Westland, and the townships of Canton, Huron, Northville, Plymouth, Redford, Sumpter and Van Buren.

"This position complements an initiative I started last year to mobilize mayors in the state," said Wild. "We are all facing issues at the state-level that impact our cities and communities. It is imperative that we collaborate and create solutions to the challenges we encounter."

The Conference is the access point for funneling information to local units from county, state and federal agencies. In this capacity, the Conference of Western Wayne will monitor state and federal legislation for impact on local government. In addition, conference personnel work as a liaison between local government and many service organizations by representing members on various committees and boards.

Despite the diversity of size, economic development and population density, member communities have been working together - working regionally - to enhance this area of Wayne County for 35 years, a spokesperson noted.

"We are fortunate to have many strong leaders in Western Wayne County like Mayor William Wild, who has volunteered his time, effort and experience to the benefit of all the Conference of Western Wayne communities," commented Jordyn Sellek, executive director of the Conference of Western Wayne. "Because of the strong leadership of our 18 Conference of Western Wayne leaders, 700,000 people choose to call western Wayne their home. I look forward to working with Mayor Wild in moving our region forward and congratulate him on his selection as the chair of the Conference of Western Wayne," she concluded.

Canton - Northville

Residents oppose new Hannan Road cell tower

The proposed new cell tower behind the Abundant Life Church of God does not have the blessing of several neighbors.

The 120-foot tower, proposed by Verizon, would bring a $1,000 monthly payment to the church which, according to pastor Dan Smitherman, would be used to expand the food pantry services at the church. The food pantry helps those who are homebound or who may not have transportation, he said.

Smitherman said the church would like to enter into the agreement with Verizon, although 145 residents have already signed a petition in opposition to the plan. Residents claim that the tower, planned for the area of west side of Hannan Road and south of Palmer, would negatively affect their home values. Members of the Canton Township Planning Commission have scheduled a public hearing on the proposal for next month.

Petition signers include residents of Canton, Westland and Wayne. The commission members will make a decision and send a recommendation for approval or denial of the plan to the Canton Township Board of Trustees, where the final decision will be made on the project. Board members rejected last July a Verizon plan to build a tower near Fellows Creek Golf Course in response to residents' opposition.

Verizon representatives claim there is a network service gap near Hannan and Palmer roads, necessitating the construction of a new tower, and that the company works to ensure compliance with all local, state and federal regulations. The proposed tower would be 340 feet from the center of Hannan Road and 820 feet from Palmer Road, according to township officials.

Welcome home

Canton Township residents Gurpreet Singh and Gagandewp Boparai welcomed the first newborn of 2016 in Wayne in the early morning hours of New Year's day. Inaya Sidhu was born at 2:34 a.m. Jan. 1, at Beaumont Hospital - Wayne. The infant weighs 6 pounds, 10-ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Photo by Tony Simler

Education Foundation 'grants' school programs

The Northville Educational Foundation awarded 49 teachers and 20 projects across the Northville Public Schools district with Innovative Grants totaling $27,892.66 last month.

According to the foundation, 36 applications were received requesting more than $68,000 in funding. The applications were reviewed by a panel of seven judges and then scored based on innovation, addressing curriculum standards, ability to be replicated, number of students impacted and goals for the project. The top scores that fit within the $28,000 budget allocated were selected for funding, according to a prepared statement from the foundation.

Both middle schools will receive funding for 3D printers and Auto Inventor software to assist with Project Lead The Way's STEM courses. Google Cardboard Virtual Reality devices to help bring what students are learning in textbooks to life will be funded at the high school and funds to build a production area for students at Ridge Wood Elementary, including a green screen and recording and videotaping equipment. The full list of winners, is available at http://www.northvilleedfoundation.org/Innovative-Grants.html.

"The Northville Educational Foundation truly appreciates these teachers who are willing to go above and beyond to bring extra programming into their classrooms so that their students can better experience what they are learning in class," noted Executive Director Jennifer Roosenberg. "I think that is what amazes me most about the Innovative Grant competition."

> *A total of $105,000 has been granted to teachers since the program began.*

"The teachers who win are genuinely excited and appreciative. However, the money we grant isn't for them. It's money given to the district so they can purchase the materials they need to make their projects a reality for their students. In actuality, they are creating more work for themselves to take on these additional projects for their students ...and they are ecstatic about the opportunity. They know these are the kind of class projects that students come home and say 'guess what we did at school today!' and will remember for years to come," Roosenberg added.

The 20 projects will be implemented in the classrooms beginning second semester of this school year and will impact nearly 4,300 students this year at eight schools. Many of them will be able to be replicated year after year.

This is the seventh year the Northville Educational Foundation has provided Innovative Grants to teachers across the district. A total of $105,000 has been granted to teachers since the program began.

Representative sets hours

State Rep. Kristy Pagan (D-Canton) will be continuing her twice-monthly coffee hours in 2016. Pagan's public coffee hours are planned to begin at 7 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month at Panera Bread, 41950 Ford Road in Canton, and at 10 a.m. on the fourth Saturday of the month at Leo's Coney Island, 9624 Belleville Road in Belleville.

Pagan said she is committed to working with the people of the 21st House District, comprising of parts of Canton and Van Buren townships and the City of Belleville, to best address residents' thoughts and concerns regarding state government.

"It is an honor to represent the people of the 21st District, and I appreciate and value the opportunity to hear directly from residents," Pagan said. "I look forward to continuing to be accessible and accountable to the people who sent me to represent them in Lansing."

Times and dates are subject to change, Pagan said, and encouraged residents to contact her directly by phone or email with any questions or concerns by calling (517) 373-2575 or by emailing kristypagan@house.mi.gov. Residents can also sign up to receive the latest updates on legislation and events by visiting pagan.housedems.com.

To subscribe to The Eagle call 734-467-1900.

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BELLEVILLE - ROMULUS

Upgrade at Civic League OK'd by council

Members of the Romulus City Council authorized additional improvements Monday to the Romulus Civic League facility on Wahrman Road that will be completed without any cost to taxpayers.

Council members unanimously approved an additional $3,500 in repairs to the building that will be funded through a community host agreement with a Romulus business.

"This is money that was previously allocated based on private donations. It is not coming from the general fund," said Romulus Mayor Leroy Burcroff. "It was private donations we were able to use, approved by our attorney, to help civic groups just like this."

The city authorized $15,000 from the Community Enhancement Fund to pay for a new roof on the building in 2014. That project was completed for $11,500. The remainder of the money will pay for new interior ceiling tiles, a door, gutters and rain spouts as well as other minor repairs, said Burcroff.

> *This is money that was previously allocated based on private donations. It is not coming from the general fund.*

The city entered into a community host agreement with Environmental Quality on Van Born Road in 2014 that allows the company to transfer non-hazardous material from incoming rail cars to trucks that then take the materials to either of its sites in Detroit or Van Buren Township. The agreement stipulates that EQ pays the city $.25 for every ton of material transferred at the facility, which is earmarked for community enhancements.

Belleville downtown authority limits grant funds

Belleville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) officials have some bad news for the planners of community events in the city.

The budget for contributions from the DDA has been reduced to $1,500 per event for this year and to only $1,000 for 2017-2018. That is a serious reduction from the $15,000 to $19,000 the authority was spending annually on various community events during the past years, but officials said bond payments have seen increases from $17,000 to $28,000, which will impact the DDA budget.

Coordinator Carol Thompson told the members of the authority that community groups receiving grants for various civic causes have been informed that the events must be helpful to downtown businesses. Thompson told the DDA board members that there hasn't been much of a change for those local businesses.

She added that it is necessary for the DDA to scale back until tax capture revenues begin to increase in the community. She added that research indicated that not many other DDA groups fund local festivals, but seem to concentrate on farmers markets and façade programs in the community.

She said it would be necessary for others in the community, including the local businesses, to fund events such as Winterfest and Artaffair.

Her suggestion was unanimously approved by a vote of the DDA board members during the Dec. 16 meeting.

The board members said that they would continue to support downtown events, but that a cap would be put on the amounts granted to the various activities, not to exceed $1,500. Previous grants had been as much at $8,000.

To qualify for consideration for a grant from the DDA, the event must be open to the public and take place within the downtown DDA district. Local businesses must participate and the event must promote downtown Belleville and include sponsorships from other in the community or region. Preference will be given, officials noted, to public events which attract a diversity of participants.

Thompson said the local groups who have requested financial assistance in the past from the DDA will be notified this month of the changes in the budget and criteria.

Mother charged with abuse in death of baby girl

Shavonne Lynise Watkins, 33, has been charged with involuntary manslaughter and second-degree child abuse in the death of her 1-year-old daughter, Malaya Tatnall.

The baby and her brother were left alone in a Romulus home which caught fire Oct. 25, claiming the life of the toddler.

Firefighters were called to the home on the 15000 block of Mountain Way Street, near Eureka and Brandt roads, at about 1:45 p.m. According to official reports, the home was fully engulfed in flames when the fire crews arrived on the scene. Firefighters were able to pull the 3-year-old boy from the burning home and transport him to a hospital where he was treated for smoke inhalation. He has reportedly recovered from his injuries. The intense heat and smoke claimed the life of the baby girl before firefighters were able to get to her in the burning home.

Neighbors, who notified the fire department, had attempted to gain access to the home to rescue the children, according to reports, but were unsuccessful. Fire officials said that several neighbors were upset when Watkins appeared on the scene and discovered that her house was on fire. Her children had been left alone on other occasions, according to neighbors, who were visibly upset, according to police and fire reports. Police took Watkins into custody at the scene for her own protection, according to official reports, but she was not charged at that time.

An immediate request for a warrant for her arrest on the charges was delayed as the Wayne County Prosecutor's office requested more information from Romulus police investigators.

Watkins was arraigned in 34th District Court before Judge David Parrott on the charges. Parrott set a cash bond of $10,000, which Watkins paid.

Her preliminary examination on the charges took place for Jan. 6 at the 34th District Court.

Shavonne Lynise Watkins

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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CANTON
ACCESS TO PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Charter Township of Canton will provide necessary, reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon a two week notice to the Charter Township of Canton. These services include signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Charter Township of Canton by writing or calling the following:

Gwyn Belcher, ADA Coordinator
Charter Township of Canton, 1150 S. Canton Center Road
Canton, MI 48188
(734) 394-5260

Published: January 14, 2016

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MINUTES OF REGULAR ROMULUS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
December 28, 2015
Romulus City Hall Council Chambers, 11111 Wayne Rd. Romulus, MI 48174

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem, John Barden.
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call
Present: Kathleen Abdo, John Barden, Harry Crout, Celeste Roscoe, William Wadsworth.
Excused: LeRoy D. Burcroff, Linda Choate, Sylvia Makowski.
Administrative Officials in Attendance:
Robert Dickerson, Chief of Staff
Ellen L. Craig-Bragg, City Clerk
Stacy Paige, Treasurer
1. Moved by **Crout,** seconded by **Roscoe** to accept the agenda as presented. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
15-429 2A. Moved by **Wadsworth**, seconded by **Abdo t**o approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council held on December 14, 2015. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
3. Petitioner: None
4. Moved by **Roscoe,** seconded by **Abdo** to accept the Chairperson's Report.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
5. Mayor's Report
6A. Clerk's Report:
15-430 6A1. Moved by **Wadsworth**, seconded by **Roscoe** to concur with the Property Disposition Committee and City Assessor, Julie Albert, to not acquire any of the properties included on the Wayne County Treasurer's Tax Foreclosed Properties in Wayne County for year 2015 dated December 9, 2015 due to the fact that none of the properties are adjacent to existing city-owned property. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
15-431 6A2. Moved by **Roscoe**, seconded by **Abdo** to adopt a resolution to thank State Representative Erika Geiss for her unwavering support of House Bill 4686 which expands a municipality's ability to defend itself against sidewalk litigation that often tends to be frivolous. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
6B. Treasurer's Report
6C. Officers Compensation Commission Report:
Councilman Wadsworth complimented the Officers Compensation Commission on their hard work in reviewing the elected officials salaries and if he receives a raise in salary, he will donate it back to to the City. Councilwoman Roscoe complimented the Officers Compensation Commission and said that she will follow suit with Councilman Wadsworth. Councilwoman Abdo expressed if no action is taken by Council, the raises go into effect in 30 days and that no raises should be given to elected officials because there are 60 homes that are foreclosed in Romulus according to the Property Disposition list. She encouraged residents to call Council members to express their thoughts on the raises. She also stated that she has been in contact with 28 people regarding the raises. Councilman Crout expressed that it wouldn't be right to give a raise to elected officials at this time when the City is asking the residents for a millage increase. City Clerk Ellen Craig-Bragg clarified the reference made regarding the 60 foreclosed homes by pointing out that the tax-foreclosed properties listed on the Property Disposition list are vacant lots and uninhabitable houses. Mayor Pro-Tem Barden complimented the Officers Compensation Commission for their hard work and expressed that it's up to the individual as to what they do with their raise in salary.
7. Public Comment
8. Unfinished Business:
Councilman Wadsworth spoke about the calls he received from residents complimenting the DPW workers on the fine job they did on the Inkster Road and Middlebelt Road water main breaks over the past two days. Councilman Wadsworth also complimented the new signage that has been placed around the City directing persons to the various city buildings. He asked if the administration could add the Library and Animal Shelter to the signage
9. New Business
10. Communication:
Councilwoman Roscoe thanked the DPW workers for coming in during the holidays to fix the water main breaks.
15-432 11. Moved by **Abdo,** seconded by **Crout** to pay Warrant 15-24 in the amount of $906,516.97. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
12. Moved by **Wadsworth,** seconded by **Roscoe** to adjourn the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
I, Ellen L. Craig-Bragg, Clerk for the City of Romulus, Michigan do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council held on December 28, 2015.

RM011416-0002 2.5 x 7.603

NOTICE
PLYMOUTH CHARTER TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS

If you experience an overflow or backup of a sewage disposal system or storm water system, you must file a written claim with the Plymouth Charter Township Department of Public Works within 45 days after the overflow or backup was discovered. Notice should be mailed to Plymouth Charter Township, Department of Public Works, 9955 N. Haggerty Rd., Plymouth, Michigan 48170. Failure to provide the written notice will prevent recovery of damages. Contact the Department of Public Works, 734-354-3270, Extension 3, for assistance immediately upon discovery of an overflow or backup.
Thank You

PLYMOUTH CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

NANCY CONZELMAN
Clerk, Charter Township of Plymouth

Publish: January 14 & 21, 2016

PT011416-0020 2.5 x 1.718

CITY OF ROMULUS
NOTICE OF
Public Hearing and Proposed Program Statement
For the FY 2016/2017
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

Pursuant to federal guidelines, the City of Romulus is scheduling a Public Hearing on Monday, *February 1, 2016 at 7:00 pm* for the purpose of receiving comments or suggestions regarding projects for the fiscal year 2016/2017 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) Program. The CITY OF ROMULUS expects to receive an ESTIMATED $168,250.

The primary objectives of the Federal HUD CDBG program are to assist low to moderate income families directly or to provide benefits in areas where 51% of the residents are low to moderate income, such as replacing the urban infrastructure of streets, improve recreational facilities and programs and assist in meeting special needs of the elderly and physically disabled.

The following projects, subject to the Public Hearing Process, have been proposed and will meet HUD objectives by benefiting low and moderate-income families, preserving deteriorating housing stock and enhancing parks and public facilities.

FY 2016/2017 Proposed Projects ACTIVITY/Location:	ESTIMATED CDBG ALLOCATION:	RECEIVED From * Program Income:
Senior Services - LMC - 05A-*Citywide Public Services -15%*	$25,237	
36525 Bibbins Chore/minor home repair services, Transportation, education, Recreation & staffing		
Park/Recreation Facilities – LMA -03F Replace aging equipment, restore grounds & purchase new equipment/structures in Parks in qualifying areas in Romulus	$52,588	
Park/Recreational Jobs - LMJFI -03F Retain at least 3 Parks employees for qualifying Parks in Romulus, MI 48174 *These jobs are made available to one full time and two part time, qualifying persons.	$73,600	
General Administration - 21A (10%) Salary reimbursement for contract administration	$16,825	
Sub-Total	$168,250	
Housing Rehabilitation LMH –from P.I.		*$5,000
TOTAL *ESTIMATED* Allocation:	$168,250.00	$5,000

The city *anticipates receiving approximately $5,000 in Program Income received through repayment of housing rehabilitation liens, to be used for emergency housing rehabilitations, and /or Senior Services, if additional funds are received.

All interested parties, organizations, agencies or individuals are invited to submit, in writing, a "Request for Funding" or comment on the Proposed Projects at, or prior to, the Public Hearing. For further information, contact the Economic Development Department, City of Romulus, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, MI 48174, (734) 942-7545.

Publish: Thursday, January 14, 2016 in The Eagle Newspaper

RM011416-0001 2.5 x 8.625

Inkster - Wayne - Westland

City hall project honored

The new Westland City Hall has been honored by the Downriver Branch of the American Public Works Association.

The national association which has state and regional chapters attempts to bring public works officials together with leading industrial representatives to discuss innovations in equipment and infrastructure, according to a prepared release.

"Westland's City Hall project has received acclaim and awards from multiple organizations," commented Mayor William R. Wild. "It has strengthened the city's profile as one of Southeast Michigan's leading innovative and environmentally conscientious cities."

Each year APWA requests nominations which demonstrate innovations in equipment and infrastructure being implemented locally. The Westland City Hall nomination cited the renovation of a blighted big box store in the middle of the city "Shop and Dine" district and into a modern, energy-efficient city hall. This retrofit saved a significant portion of the 64,000 square-foot commercial building from being razed and solved a decades-old problem of replacing the former undersized city hall.

This green-mindedness along with features incorporated into the design by OHM Advisors, including the installation of window walls along the length of the southern wall, along with skylights and self-extinguishing lights, gained high marks from the judging panel. The new, larger city hall replaced the former cramped 13,500 square foot building which served the City of Westland since 1966. This allowed many city departments to be joined at one location, providing the convenience to residents of a "one-stop shop". Officials evaluated several alternative locations, but none were as cost effective as the retrofit which took a defunct building and turned it into a leading green-infrastructure functional facility.

The Westland City Hall project will now be considered for the American Public Works Association state level award and could continue to the national level.

"We are pleased to be able to recognize the City of Westland's green design initiatives through the Structural Project of the Year Award," commented John Thompson, president of LiquiForce, APWA Downriver Chapter. "The revitalization of a vacant building into a vibrant fully functioning public facility to serve the residents sets a precedent for other communities."

Super star

Chelsea Blackburn of Westland has been honored twice for her prowess on the ice with her hockey team at Stevenson College in Maryland. The sophomore has been named to the college weekly honor roll for two consecutive weeks after totaling four points consisting of one assist and three goals in a single game. Blackburn, 20, graduated from Wayne Memorial High School in 2013 and is a life long Westland resident. She has won 10 of 30 face-offs and recorded a plus-three rating on her college team. She leads division three with nine goals after totaling 11 points in the past five games played. She is also tied for second in the division with two shorthanded goals and averages of 1.83 points per game. She is the daughter of Tim and Donna Blackburn and is pursuing a nursing degree at college.

North Pole golf classic set

The Wayne Commission on Aging and Friends of the The Northpole Classic will host the annual golf outing for 2016 beginning with check-in at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 30 at Westland Municipal Golf Course, located at 500 Merriman Road. Play will begin at 10 a.m.

The fee is $25 per golfer which includes nine holes of golf, a hot dog, bag of chips and two beverages.

There will also be a raffle for prizes among those brave enough to do battle with Mother Nature in January which organizers claim is part of the fun of the event.

Registration forms are available at the HYPE Recreation Center, formerly the Wayne Community Center, through Wayne Senior Services.

The building is located at 4635 Howe Road in Wayne.

Pre-registration is urged before Jan. 26 as space is limited.

Cash or checks made payable to the City of Wayne will be accepted but no credit cards.

For further information, call Wayne Senior Services at (734)721-7460 Funds from the event will be used to help support the Wayne Senior Services office.

Legends 'grandparents' are thanked by program director

The foster grandparents who participate in the Inkster Legends basketball camps are one of the key elements in the program, said Legends Director Fred Smiley.

"The foster grandparents play a key role in all of our events. At the camps, they make us all proud because we are still learning form them. They make sure the kids say thank you and please while getting refreshments and a lunch. They pass out shirts for the camp and help with the applications," Smiley said.

"At the recent Christmas giveaway, the foster grandparents helped check people in."

Smiley said the foster grandparents program began with 10 volunteers from the community in 1997. While four of the original grandparents have died, Dorothy Riley, now more than 90 and residing in a nursing home, "still cherishes her Legends shirt and her fond memories" of the times she spent helping the youngsters at the camps, he said.

"The foster grandparents, along with all of our great coaching staff and all of our volunteers make up our team. The reason we've been so successful for 18 years is because everyone that works with us takes ownership in the program and those that make sure all the kids are respectful to everyone.We need everyone's best effort to be successful" Smiley said.

Calendar of events

Soccer registration is under way

Plymouth spring soccer registration will take place during the entire month of January at the recreation office from 11:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday through Friday on online 24/7. Last day of registration is Jan. 31 an the last day of in-office registration is Jan. 29.

To register online, players or parents must have an email address on file, a username, and a password; for first time users this can be set-up by the recreation department by email at recreation@ci.plymouth.mi.us [mailto:recreation@ci.plymouth.mi.us] , or call (734)455-6620, or visit the Soccer Webpage, which has registration forms and a link to online registration at: www.ci.plymouth.mi.us/soccer [http://www.ci.plymouth.mi.us/index.aspx?NID=655] .

The recreation office is located at 525 Farmer in Plymouth.

Blankets are needed

Plymouth Community United Way is holding a Blanket Drive in support of the homeless community through tomorrow.

Blankets must be new, or handmade, and can be dropped at the Plymouth Community United Way office. The address is 960 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Suite 2, Plymouth, MI 48170.

For more information, call Randi Williams at (734) 453-6879, ext. 7 or e-mail randi.williams@pcuw.org.

Hot Reads for Cold Nights

The Adult Winter Reading Program will be under way at the Romulus Community Library through March 30.

Readers should register at the front desk to receive a reading log and record each book read by March 30 when a reception including food, hot cocoa and prize drawings will take place at 6:30 p.m.

The library is located at 11121 Wayne Road in Romulus. For more information, call (734) 942-7589.

Museum seeks volunteers

The Wayne Historical Museum is seeking volunteers to help with various jobs including tour guides, display assistants and promotions.

Training will be provided and volunteers can choose their schedules and hours.

Applications are available at the museum from 1-4 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. For more information, call (734) 722-0113.

Bricks for sale

Memorial bricks to be installed at the veteran's memorial in the City of Romulus are for sale, to honor those who have served in the armed services of our country.

Bricks on the veteran's wall are priced at $125 with two lines of text and bricks on the walkway with two lines are $75. Larger size walkway bricks are available for $100 and include four lines of text.

Orders for the bricks are being accepted at the treasurer's office in Romulus City Hall, 11111 Wayne Road in Romulus, the Romulus Chamber of Commerce office at 11189 Shook Road in Romulus or the Romulus VFW Post 9568, 39270 W. Huron River Dr. In Romulus.

For more information, contact the treasurer's office, (734) 942-7580.

Storytimes begin at library

Family Storytime for children 4-10-years old will take place at 6:30 p.m. Mondays through Feb. 22 at the Belleville District Library.

Toddler Times Storytime for children 2-4 years of age will take place at 11 a.m. Tuesdays through Feb. 23 and Thursday Toddler Times Storytime is scheduled for 11 a.m. Thursdays through Feb. 25.

The library is located at 167 Fourth St. in Belleville. For more information, call (734) 699-3291.

School planning sessions set

Wayne Westland school administrators are developing a strategic plan to guide the direction of the district through the next 5 to 10 years.

That plan will include the aid of local residents in shaping those dreams for the future of students in the district.

A series of 2-hour meetings has been scheduled through the end of January and will culminate in a presentation to members of the board of education in spring 2016.

Meetings are set for:

• Jan. 19, 1 p.m., Community Meeting (open to all community members), Jefferson-Barns Community Vitality Center, 31250 Dorsey, in Westland.

• Jan. 19, 6 p.m., Community Meeting (open to all community members), Wayne City Hall, 3355 S. Wayne Road, in Wayne.

• Jan. 28, 6 p.m., Parent Meeting (all parents welcome), Taft-Galloway Elementary School, 4035 Gloria, in Wayne.

Suggestions can also be submitted to http://wwcsd.net/home/strategic-planning-information/.

More information about the meetings and the process is available from Cheryl Watson or Sue Rawson at (734) 419-2010.

Painting classes available

Acrylic Painting Classes for adults with Denise Cassidy Wood will take place from noon until 2 p.m. beginning Jan. 14 and continue for six weeks.

The cost is $100 for members of the Plymouth Community Arts Council and $110 for non-members.

Classes will take place at the arts council building, 774 North Sheldon Road in Plymouth. For more information, access plymoutharts.com.

Dance workshops offered

Los Angeles-based choreographers from Flow 40 Dance Workshops will coach students in classes from 1-6:30 p.m. Jan. 16 and from 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Jan. 17 at Central City Dance, 6700 N. Canton Center Road in Canton.

Four levels of classes for students ranging in age from 6-18 years and will include jazz, tap, ballet, hip hop, lyrical, contemporary, and musical theatre. Each hour focuses on technique and having fun in a positive learning environment.

Master Choreographers Nick Drago, Grant Chenok, and EJ Ferencak will teach.

For more information, access wwwcentralcitydance.com.

Butterflies are topic

Pollinator Preservation Strategies for the Home Garden will be the topic at the 7 p.m. Jan. 29 meeting of the Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association at the Nankin Mills Nature Center in Westland.

Cheryl English, advanced master gardener certified through Michigan State University Extension, will be speaking on pollinator preservation strategies for home gardens. For more information, call (734) 223-5510 or visit www.sembabutterfly.org.

Wild game dinner planned

The Wayne County Fair Association, Inc. Will host a Wild Game Benefit Dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Wayne County Fairgrounds, 10871 Quirk Road in Belleville.

Dinner will be served at 6:15 p.m.

Presale tickets are priced at $30 and tickets purchased at the door are priced at $35. There will be door prizes and raffles and all proceeds will be used for the upkeep of the Wayne County Fairgrounds.

For more information, call Mary Zellner, (734) 942-1684 or Tom Busenbark, (734) 799-3692.

Chorus sets practices

Members of the Belleville Community Chorus will resume practices for their spring session at 7 p.m. Jan. 25 at the Belleville United Methodist Church, 417 Charles St.

New members of the chorus are being sought and anyone interested in joining should arrive at 6:30 p.m. so the chorus director can place their voice in the group.

Rehearsals take place at the church at 7 p.m. every Monday. For questions contact Lori Day at (734) 660-0797 or see www.Bellevillechorus.org

Belleville Kiwanis to meet

Belleville Kiwanis members meet at 6:30 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. The next meeting with be Jan. 26 at Wayne County Community College West Campus, Room C-104, 9555 Haggerty, Belleville.

Individuals interested in joining the club should contact Larry Memmer at larrymemmer@gmail.com.

Inspire Theatre presents lady pirates

Inspire Theater will present The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree weekends from Jan. 29 through Feb. 14 at the Westland Center for the Arts, 33455 Warren Road in Westland.

The play features the crew of the Kala Mae in their swashbuckling musical tale of Captain Bree and her lady pirates roaming the Seven Seas in search of adventure, love and laughter.

Curtain time is 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m. on Sundays.

Tickets, priced at $16 for the musical comedy, are available by calling (734)751-7057 or access InspireTheatre.com.

Library sells used books

Friends of the Romulus Library are planning a used book sale open from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. Jan. 14; from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Jan. 15 and 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Jan. 16.

As always, Saturday is $3 Bag Day.

Proceeds support library programs for adults, teens and children.

The library is located at 11121 Wayne Road in Romulus. For more information, call (734) 942-7589.

PLYMOUTH

Candidate will challenge Plymouth treasurer

Plymouth Township Treasurer Ron Edwards will face at least one declared challenger in the November election.

Mark Clinton, 57, a 27-year-township resident with a Masters in Business Administration degree from the University of Michigan and a 25-year track record of success with Fortune 50 organizations, has announced his candidacy for the treasurer's job.

"I'm not a politician. If people are going to vote for this job based on political savvy, I'm not your guy. If they want a strong, analytical person in a business position, I think I could do a pretty good job," Clinton said.

Clinton, the brother of former Michigan State Treasurer R. Kevin Clinton, said he was following in his brother's footsteps by leaving the private sector for municipal finance, "on a much smaller scale."

Clinton said his decision to seek the job was based on his growing awareness of the discontent and lack of trust with the current administration among township residents.

"Like everybody else, I was busy, I didn't pay too much attention, until the situation became a matter of public concern and open discussion," he said. "Then, several people approached me about the job and I decided that this was a situation where I could give back to the community.

"I'm now in a position in my life where I can do that," he said. Clinton's youngest child will graduate from college this year which, he said, will "give me a huge raise."

Clinton reiterated that he is not a politician or an experienced campaigner and has never sought elected office.

"I'm not going to ask people for money, or to throw fundraising parties for me," he said. "I am going to self-fund whatever campaigning I do."

Clinton said that he felt the most significant issue in the township is the loss of trust among residents. "We have to get that back and the way to do that is transparency," he said. "I believe in absolute, total transparency and the way to get back trust is transparency."

While he refused to criticize anyone in the current administration, he said that certain financial matters prompt some questions. "I am not suggesting improprieties," he said, "but as a financial professional, there are some

Mark Clinton

issues of concern."

Clinton said he would not oppose a forensic audit of the township finances should he be elected and find that he needed help in unraveling accounts.

"I'm not going to make promises and tell you what I think needs to be done. I can't say what is needed and what isn't without a closer look at the situation. I can't say I would do this or do that within the first 90 days. What I can say is that for the first 90 days I would take a careful look at the financial picture and decide what the first five things I needed to do would be."

To accommodate that transparency, he said that most people cannot read a financial statement or balance sheet and that his goal would be to translate those reports into "simple terms people can understand."

"In a township like ours, we don't have the ability to raise revenue. Our revenue is controlled by the tax rate. What we have to do is control expenses and have a plan to make sure that we have put enough aside to pay for the services we must provide, pay our debts, including adequate funding for pensions and other benefits," he said.

Clinton said his other goal would be a 5-year projection of revenue and expenses. "I think our board now is looking at this year-to-year and I believe we need a more comprehensive, longer-term look at finances," he said.

Clinton said he believes credit cards for representatives and employees are a business convenience, but that a monthly accounting, with accurate records has to be part of the procedure. He said he "feels safe" in the community with the current police and fire staffing, but is well aware that public safety, particularly fire staffing, is a major issue with residents.

"I would absolutely consult with experts in other communities to ensure that we are adequately covered," he said.

Clinton also stressed his strong belief that the township should be working closely with the City of Plymouth and other communities.

Clinton attended the University of Michigan on a full athletic scholarship and maintained a 3.7 and 4-point grade point average with distinction. He was chosen by the Houston Astros in a Major League Baseball draft where he played in the farm league before beginning his career as a financial, technical and business manager, where, he said, in 22 years, he has never missed a day of work.

He said he would leave his current position with Cisco Systems where he is an executive director if he were elected.

He and his wife, Carol, are the parents of three children, Lisa, Kyle and Mitch, all of whom graduated from Canton High School and then attended Michigan, Michigan State and Albion colleges, respectively.

Land

FROM PAGE 1

Nancy Conzelman but were unable to reach any reasonable resolution.

Subsequently the Detroit attorneys filed a lawsuit in April 2013 after attempted negotiations were unsuccessful.

In February 2015 Plymouth Township was ordered by Chief Judge Robert J. Colombo to return the farmland purchased from Wayne County to the City of Detroit, "the rightful owner of the property," ruling that the tax foreclosure sale was improper.

The township appealed the decision in April seeking to overturn Colombo's ruling. The Detroit attorneys said the city was anxious to sell the valuable land, once listed on property records for $15 million, and in June requested and was granted an expedited hearing in the Court of Appeals.

In the interim period, township officials retained Cox, a high-ranking Republican Party leader and political associate of Township Supervisor Shannon Price, to handle the case in the appeals court. Kevin Bennett of Hemming, Polaczyk, Cronin, Witthoff and Bennett, the current contract attorney for the township, drafted the initial court brief before Cox took over the case, attended the hearing but didn't participate in the oral arguments.

"We don't dispute Judge Colombo's findings, but his application of the law," Cox told the panel of judges.

City of Detroit Deputy Corporate Counsel Chuck Raimi argued to the court that not only did the township not send the tax bills but also "the city was never properly notified of the foreclosure."

Township attorneys argued that the Wayne County Treasurer sent the notice to "City of Detroit Planning and Development Department, 2 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48226-3437. The trial court concluded this was insufficient as the address was incomplete, incorrect and not the location of the city law department.

Plymouth Township attorneys based their appeal on two technical positions. First that Colombo erred in concluding the foreclosure did not comport with due process and second that he erred in concluding the State Tax commission, which prohibits foreclosure of publicly-owned property, prohibited the foreclosure of the subject property.

Raimi told the court the overriding issue at hand was the due process of law and the foreclosure was illegal, refuting township arguments about whether or not 2 Woodward Ave. was a valid address.

"There's no relationship…" Raimi told the court. "This parcel was never properly in the foreclosure process to begin with."

At the time of Detroit attorneys filed the lawsuit, Wayne County attorney Jack Ghannam said the county relied completely on information received from Plymouth Township regarding the foreclosure proceedings. The township supervisor, by township charter, is the chief assessing officer for the township and Treasurer Ron Edwards is responsible for collecting and forwarding property tax information to the county.

Talbot told the attorneys for both sides that he felt their arguments were "well-briefed and well-argued."

After the meeting, Price said, "I think we made a good case and I'm happy with it. I think we're in the right position."

State Rep. Kurt Heise who also attended the hearing, said later he has doubts the township will overturn the decision of Colombo, calling the appeal "a waste of taxpayer dollars."

"The fact remains, however, that Plymouth Township does not come across as an innocent party to these proceedings," Heise added. "At best, this land deal was handled in a sloppy manner. At worst, we might be looking at fraud."

Heise announced his candidacy for Plymouth Township Supervisor last October.

Raimi said, "I can't accuse them of fraud, but it's certainly not an appropriate foreclosure." He admitted the city didn't have the time or resources to dig into the issue mainly because of the Detroit bankruptcy.

"We never got the notices of foreclosure; they were sent to a crazy non-existent address," Raimi said.

Detroit officials were notified of the county foreclosure in July 2012 when township resident Richard Sharland's research proved that Detroit was actually legal owner of the land and he subsequently called the erroneous transaction to the attention of Detroit City Council members with the help of Beverly Kindle-Walker a legislative assistant to Wayne County Commissioner Tim Killeen.

Tributes to Dr. King set in communities

FROM PAGE 1

but in 1983 President Ronald Reagan signed the bill officially marking Dr. King's contributions to America with a day dedicated to his memory.

In Canton Township:

Canton Township will once again honor the memory and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a special tribute at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 18 at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, located at 50400 Cherry Hill Road.

A display of artworks by area students and a punch and cookie reception will begin at the Village Theater at 6 p.m., followed by the main program at 6:30 p.m. This annual event is presented by the Canton Commission for Culture, Arts, and Heritage, members of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sub-Committee, and Canton Township. Admission to this special presentation is $2 and reserved seats can be purchased online at www.cantonvillagetheater.org.

This year will feature a panel discussion of interfaith speakersincluding Pastor David Washington, Jr., the founding and senior pastor of Canton Christian Fellowship Church; Bill Secrest, a Zan Buddhist, recently retired as the director of the Henry Ford College Religious Studies Program; Chandru Acharya, president of South Asian American Voices for Impact and board member of the Canton Interfaith Community Outreach and teach at Canton Hindu Temple Balgokulam; Saleem Khallid, consultant to the Muslum Enrichment Project, who gives khutbahs and leads prayers throughout metropolitan Detroit, and Paul Talwar, a member of the Canton Interfailth Community Outreach team and teacher at the Gurdwara, who will represent the Sikh community.

The speakers will share the impact Dr. King has had on their lives and the lives of their faith communities. In addition, panelists will comment on the Civil Rights movement and its similarities to today, as well as their strategies for fostering an environment of peace in the community.

The program will also feature music by the Workman Elementary School Choir under the direction of Keri L. Mueller, and dance by Kelsey Rose and Detroit Tap Repertory.

Canton Township Officials John Anthony, Terry Bennett, Phil LaJoy, Melissa McLaughlin, Steven Sneideman and Patrick Williams personally donated the scholarship and award money for winners of the art and essay contests.

Frames for the selected works were generously donated by IKEA Canton last year and will be used every year to feature the student work. The reception is sponsored annually by Darian and Ralynda Moore of Keller Williams Realty of Plymouth.

For more information about this special performance and the latest exhibition in the Gallery@VT, call (734) 394-5300 or visit www.cantonvillagetheater.org

In Romulus

The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. community celebration in Romulus will take place beginning at 7:30 a.m. Jan. 18 at Romulus Middle School when participants will meet for a celebratory march.

The event is organized by the City of Romulus, the Romulus Ministerial Alliance and the Romulus Community Schools and will include the annual march from Romulus Middle School, 37300 Wick Road to Romulus High School, 9650 Wayne Road.

A continental breakfast will be served to marchers in the Romulus High School cafeteria beginning at 8 a.m. and at 9:30 a.m. the program will begin in the Romulus High School auditorium.

The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact the Rev. Arthur Willis, committee chairman, (313) 701-2423 or Ellen Craig-Bragg, (734) 955-4545.

In Westland

Mildred Gaddis, one of Detroit's most trusted and respected journalists and award-winning news/talk show host, will deliver the keynote address at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Ceremony in Westland. The event will begin with a freedom walk from John Glenn High School to the Friendship Center at 9 a.m. Jan. 18. The Friendship Center is located at 1119 Newburgh Road.

Participants are asked to gather at John Glenn High School, located at 36105 Marquette Road beginning at 8:30 a.m. The Freedom Walk will symbolize all of those who marched with Dr. King 50 years ago. The short walk will end at the Friendship Center and continuous shuttles will be available to return participants to their vehicles.

The Friendship Center will open to seat visitors at 9 a.m. for the 10 a.m. prayer breakfast and ceremony.

Gaddis, a 40-year radio veteran, has been described by the Detroit Free Press as one of 10 African Americans to watch in Detroit. Her sometimes no-nonsense, but warm and inspiring style has made her a force to be reckoned with and admired by politicians and residents through Metro Detroit. For 13 years she reigned as the only woman in the male dominated morning drive 6-10 a.m. slot.

"In this 21st century America the great tragedy is still man's inhumanity to man," commented Gaddis. "I look forward to sharing my message of hope with the proud residents of Westland, as they honor the life of one of America's greatest sons."

The Master of Ceremonies for this year's celebration will be popular Detroit historian Ken Coleman. Coleman, author of On this Day: African-American Life in Detroit, is a native Detroiter and former news reporter and editor at the Michigan Chronicle.

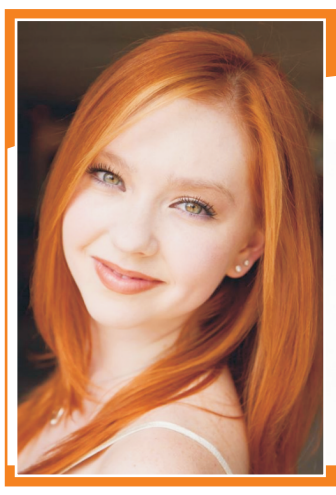
"Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a time to honor Dr. King's life and legacy and reflect on how we can best live up to his dream today," said Mayor William R. Wild. "I am honored to be joined by such esteemed figures as our community pauses to celebrate the life of this incredible man."

Mildred Gaddis

The program will include messages from local clergy and is being funded by the Westland Police Community Partnership Committee.

For more information, call (734) 722-7628.

(Editor's note: Details of other community events were unavailable at press time.)



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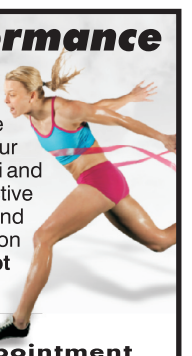

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